

PRESS RELEASE

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WISCONSIN DELLS MAN SENTENCED TO FOUR YEARS IN PRISON FOR POSSESSING THOMPSON SUBMACHINE GUN

Madison, Wisconsin -- Erik C. Peterson, United States Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin, announced that Richard Ryerson, 40, of Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin, was sentenced today by U.S. District Judge John C. Shabaz to four years in federal prison, followed by three years of supervised release, for possessing a machine gun in violation of federal law. Ryerson pleaded guilty to the charge on January 3, 2007.

Law enforcement officials discovered the M1A1 Thompson submachine gun behind drywall in Ryerson's garage during a search of his home on February 10, 2006. The defendant's sentence was enhanced because the Court found he obstructed justice during the course of the investigation. While in jail on unrelated charges, defendant became worried that authorities might search his house and find the gun, so he called a friend to retrieve and dispose of it. The friend attempted to comply, and went to defendant's house, but officers were already there.

The charges against Ryerson were the result of an investigation conducted by the

Adams County Sheriff's Department; the Wisconsin Department of Justice, Division of Criminal Investigation; and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. The prosecution of the case has been handled by Assistant U.S. Attorney Meredith P. Duchemin.

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